

HISTORY OF WASATCH COUNTY

- John Crook

In commencing to write a brief history of Wasatch County, from the first attempt at location, I shall have to draw from memory for a good many dates and incidents. I will endeavor to quote dates as near as my memory will dictate. If I should make any mistakes, I will ever be willing to be corrected, Yours truly, John Crook.

In the early settlement of Utah Territory, Wasatch County was considered a part of Utah County, very little was known of the county up to the year 1858. Some few hardy pioneers had followed up the Provo River, and found a beautiful valley here, and christened it Provo Valley, after the name of the river, which meanders through the western part of the valley. The Indian name for the valley was Timpanogas. Indian Chief Walker and his band, claimed the country as their hunting ground. The altitude was then considered too high for the production of cereals; only fit for stock range.

Charles N. Carroll, George Jacques, James Adams and some others, when working at the Big Cottonwood saw mills, in the summer of 1857, having heard of the valley, concluded to explore the country. So, starting early one morning from the head of Big Cottonwood Canyon, they came over the ridge, down to Snake Creek, followed the river across the center of the valley to about the present site of Heber City, and returned again the same day. When they came down to Provo City, they told of their explorations and of the beautiful valley they had found up on the Provo River, which created some little excitement among the people of Provo, and also created a desire in some few to see more of the country. Provo Valley is about ten miles long, north and south, and about the same distance east and west, at the longest points, being oblong in shape.

As I said before this valley was very little known up to the year 1858. In the early spring of that year, the "Mormon Exodus", so called, took place. The inhabitants of Salt Lake Valley and all north of that county were counseled to move south. When Johnson's Army had passed through Salt Lake Valley and had located at Camp Floyd in Cedar Valley, word was received that the people might move back in safety to their homes. Brigham Young, while in Provo City, having heard of the Provo Valley and vicinity thereof, concluded to have a road made through Provo Canyon, and advised the settlement of the valley. A company was therefore organized, work immediately commenced, and a good substantial road was completed through the canyon before winter set in, costing about \$20,000.

William M. Wall, George W. Bean, and William Meeks, Aaron Daniels and

others, drove up a lot of stock and herded them in the valley, during the summer of 1858, and went to work building ranches, and putting up hay with the intention of wintering them in the valley. William M. Wall built a ranch at the south end of the valley, Father Decker bought the ranch which is now known as John Brown's farm. Aaron Daniels, built a ranch house about two miles north of Father Decker, and William Meeks built another about a mile north of Daniel's on what is now called Meek's Bottoms. (this was reportedly near the river bottoms between Wilsons and Kohlers) All of the above parties, I think, kept some stock all winter in the valley. Along in the month of July 1858, a company of Provo citizens with J. C. Snow, surveyor of Utah County, entered the valley and surveyed a tract of land, one and a half miles square, in the south portion of what is now known as the north field.

This plat, or survey consisted of three blocks square, 160 acres in each block, with four rod streets, around each block. The blocks were subdivided into twenty acre lots, no person being allowed to claim more than one lot. An incident occurred while this same company was camped on what is known as Spring Creek, which put a damper on their feelings, with regard to the settlement of the valley. Leaving some water in their tin cups over night, ice formed about half an inch thick and this was the hot month of July.

Sometime in the month of October 1858, another party of men, with said James C Snow arrived in the valley and surveyed the west field, starting at a point half mile west of what is known as George W. Clyde's corner, running thence south one mile, thence west to Provo River and over said river, thence north to the plat of land that was surveyed in July. This was also surveyed into twenty acre lots and all claimed. This ended the surveys for 1858.

There now being over one hundred claims established, which made a showing for a sure settlement in the future. The present site of Heber City was examined and it was deemed advisable to leave one mile square for a city.

During the winter of 1858-1859, a party of young men from Provo City wintered on Meek's Bottom and fed a lot of stock there. I will relate an incident that occurred that winter, which may be interesting to some of the old settlers of the valley. If it had not been for these young men being there with the stock two young boys would no doubt have frozen to death. William Clegg and a fellow comrade who had been working at Ft. Bridger, were returning home and concluded to take the shortest route from Silver Creek to Provo. They traveled with a company of soldiers to Silver Creek.

This was, I believe, about Christmas week which is most generally a stormy time, and all old settlers know what stormy weather meant in those days in Provo Valley. Leaving Silver Creek on foot for Provo City, snow being deep and very soft, making very little progress, night overtook them and they had no shelter, only a willow bush. A miserable night was passed, next morning they were off again, tramp, tramp, all day, nothing to eat, night again overtook them, almost famished, and "about give out". They were almost discouraged and ready to lie down in their tracks. While toiling along in this condition they heard a dog barking in the distance. This put new life in them, so they toiled on until they arrived at a log cabin, which proved to be a haven of rest to their famished and worn out bodies. It was now near midnight and they had not tasted food for nearly two days. They knocked at the door. How joyfully they heard the welcome words, "Come In". They entered and were made right welcome. During the afternoon the storm abated, their boots were wet and had frozen to their feet. The men worked bravely, got some snow, rubbed their feet, got them thawed out and then replenished them with food and dry clothing. By this time it was nearly morning, and they lay down to rest for a little while. When they arose again they felt sore and tired, so they concluded to stay a day or two. When recuperated they started again for their destination, arriving home about New Year's Day. This ends the first eventful year, 1858.

As a good many citizens of Provo were interested in the settlement of the valley, by land claims, there began to be some inquiry made, whether anything was going to be done towards an organization for safety. Knowing it to be an Indian country, liable to an attack of the redmen at any time, the query was "What shall we do?". So a meeting was called, early in the year, for the purpose of effecting an organization, or adopting some plan of procedure for the future safety and welfare of the entire community, as the time was drawing near when parties would be thinking of moving up into the valley to make locations. At the first meeting, there was considerable discussion on the merits and demerits of the climate. George W. Bean made quite a speech on the demerits of the climate, he thought it too cold for a grain country; it only being fit for a stock range. Others belonging to the party that came to the valley the year previous, and had experienced the cold nights of July, when water froze half an inch thick in their tin cups, spoke in the same strain. They felt a little doubtful about grain maturing there. But others, again felt determined to give it a trial.

The first meeting ended in nothing but discussion. Other meetings

were called, until at last an agreement was concluded, and William Meeks was chosen to take charge of affairs and regulations, with regard to locating in a body of safety. The spring season opened very cold and stormy, considerable snow falling, and keeping the canyon road blocked for travel until late in April. I remember the cold season very distinctly; Richard Sessions, George Fraughton, Thomas Rasband, John Crook and others, residents of Provo, were working a water ditch from the river to the east bench. While doing this work we were camping out, at the mouth of the canyon, and we felt the cold severely. In the morning when going to the river for water, we discovered the water running full of mush ice. Every morning ice formed on the rocks at the bottom of the river. This occurred about the middle of April. Thomas Rasband and I worked for about two weeks and returned home to prepare for our journey to Provo Valley. A company was formed, and on the last day of April, a start was made. The following ten persons composed the company: Charles N. Carroll, Thomas Rasband, John Jordan, John Crook, John Carlile Sen., James Caarlile, Mr. Carpenter, Jesse Bond, Henry Chatwin and William Giles. After traveling up the canyon to within about one mile of the South Fork, we encountered a big snow slide. The slide extended from the edge of the mountain to the river, and was about a quarter of a mile wide. Here we had to take our wagons apart, and carry them over the snow slide. By the time we got over, night overtook us and we made camp for the night. The next day we traveled on to William M. Wall's ranch, arriving in the valley on the evening of the first day of May.

Early the next morning, we crossed the river, and after traveling for about two miles we arrived at Daniels' ranch, where we crossed the creek on an ice bridge. We journeyed on about a mile further to Meek's ranch, turned our teams out to feed, and concluded to have breakfast. Mr. Carpenter shot a sandhill crane and insisted upon cooking it for our breakfast, which caused considerable merriment in the camp. After breakfast was over, we started out on foot in a northerly direction to find a suitable place for the location of our camp. We found it very difficult to cross Center Creek and Lake Creek, because of the drifts of snow, which lay in the willows along the banks. In a few hours we arrived at the plat of ground designated for a city; near the place where John M. Murdock's house now stands. In looking north we saw two dark objects moving along and after gazing intently for some time, we saw that they were moving backwards and forward. The idea struck us that it was some parties plowing; so off we started to fathom the problem; in drawing near to the objects we found our conjectures to be correct. The first team we arrived

at was William Davidson, with two yoke of cattle, and plowing on the twenty acres of land now owned by John Turner, in the north field. The other team of two yoke of cattle belonged to Robert Broadhead, and James Davis. They were plowing on a piece of ground due east of William Davidson. On inquiry they told us they had been in the valley about two weeks; but on account of a big snow storm, no plowing had been done until the day before, which was the first day of May. I think this was the first soil turned over with a plow in the valley. These parties had come on from Salt Creek, or Nephi, Juab County. They were plowing inside of the one and a half mile square plat of land surveyed the preceding July. This plat of land being already claimed, and our party not feeling desirous of jumping any one's claims, concluded to examine further on up the river. We traveled on about half a mile and found the north line of stakes, of said plat and found some good land just north of it. So we went to work and staked off twenty acres each, as near as we could ascertain, by stepping off the ground, and concluded to commence plowing immediately. In looking around for a good camping place we concluded to move our wagons next day to what is now known as the London Spring branch or John McDonald's spring.

After moving we built a large wickiup of poles, covering it with willows, long wheat, grass and dirt. I have known as many as thirty persons crowded in there of a night. It being a mammoth affair it was christened London Wickiup, hence the name London Spring. The moving and building occupied about two days, and I think it was about the fifth day of May, Thomas Rasband and myself, having only one yoke of cattle each joined our teams together and commenced plowing.

All went well for two or three days, the weather being fine and pleasant and then came the north wind and some little snow, not enough to stop our plowing, though we had to put on overcoats and mittens. It was fearfully cold, indeed, and kept snowing and blowing for about two weeks.

About the 15th of the month William M. Wall and Silas Smith, Presiding Bishop of Provo at the time rode up to us on horseback.

"Hello" said they, "what are you doing here?" "Plowing a little", we replied. "Oh you can't raise any grain here", said Mr. Wall, "It is too cold". "Well", we said, "We are going to try, and trust to providence". "You have considerable grit", was the reply, "to plow in such weather as this", and with that they rode away.

We kept plowing until about the 20th and then returned to Provo city for more grain and supplies. In about a week we returned again to the

valley. Quite a number of persons joined our company, on our return, among whom were Thomas H. Giles, John Giles, Hyrum Oaks, Martin Oaks, Sydney Epperson and others whom I do not remember now.

An accident occurred while traveling through the canyon in which one of our company came near being shot. James Carlile had his wife Emma along and the road being very bad, she was walking along by the side of a wagon, and while Martin Oaks was taking his gun from the back of the wagon, it was accidentally discharged. The ball went through the fleshy part of his arm and grazed the face of Emma Carlile. Mr. Oaks had to return to Provo to have his arm attended to.

It took us a long time to get over the big snow slide, so we camped for the night. Starting early next morning we traveled on to Wall's ranch and found the river too high to cross there; so we came up the canyon by William Bagley's farm and came over the Soldiers Pass (now called) and traveled down to Snake Creek. We crossed the stream and came down to the river, about where the bridge now is on the road to Midway. Here we concluded to cross the river. James Carlile having two yoke of big cattle, crossed over without any difficulty. Thomas H. and John Giles next tried to cross. Their cattle being rather small the current swung the leaders down stream which cause the wheelers to swing round so short that the wagon was nearly upset. The right front wheel caught a stump, bringing the cattle down stream and against the bank in deep water. T. H. Giles got out on the tongue to unyoke the cattle but fell into the river. He managed to get out and the tongue chain was cut with an axe, thus freeing the nearly drowned cattle and they succeeded in swimming to the opposite side. The wagon was then pulled back out of the river and James Carlile came over with his cattle and took the wagon across safely. All the other wagons crossed without trouble, and we went on our way rejoicing, arriving that night at the great London Wickiup. Sometime about the last of May, President William Meeks, Jesse Fuller, (deputy surveyor) and quite a number of men arrived at our camp. A meeting was called and the question was raised in regard to the ownership of the land already surveyed. It was decided to resurvey all lands. The next morning a regular stampede took place, each one trying to pick on the best twenty acres. Surveyor Fuller commenced at George W. Clyde's corner and worked westward. He put down a man's name to each twenty acres that he surveyed until the first survey of one and a half miles square was nearly all taken up.

About the first of June, the grain crops were all in, and we turned our attention to fencing in the big field. Richard Sessions and sons

commenced at the river and ran east on a line to about where Charles Thomas now resides. Then a turn was made and the fence ran southeast to London Spring; thence in a southerly direction to the city limits.

Sometime about the middle of June, Deputy surveyor Jesse Fuller commenced to survey the plat of land that had been left for a town site, the starting point being George W. Clyde's corner. Charles N. Carroll and John Crook were chain bearers. The survey was run on the west line of main street for eight blocks; thence west five and a half blocks; thence north eight blocks to the north field line of survey.

This section of land was staked off in blocks and lots at this time, the east part of the city was done some two months later. A fort line, four rods square was also laid off at this time. Some parties moved down on the fort line immediately and commenced building. Elias Cox (I Think) put up the first house.. John Hamilton was not far behind with his house. Others followed suit right along.

Parties of men kept coming and going all summer and fall, inquiring for land. The Gray brothers of Provo representing a company of men had a large tract of land surveyed northeast of the city limits in the fall. A party of men from Spanish Fork came up to the valley and had a large tract of land surveyed east of the city limits.

In the month of September there were quite a few houses erected by parties who intended wintering here; they were erected mostly on the north and west line of the fort. The grain was about all harvested in this month. About the last of the month Thomas Rasband and myself had finished cutting our grain and were returning to the fort, when we were caught in a fearful snow storm, and we felt thankful that our harvesting was completed. Grain in the north field was shrunk considerably by frost. Some grain was good on Center Creek. Darwin M. Walton, William Cummings, Robert Parker and others raised quite a lot of grain on Center Creek. Jesse McCarroll and company bought a machine from Provo to do the threshing.

There was some grain raised on Snake Creek. Father William Woods and some with a company from American Fork, settled and established claims that same summer. Peter Shirts started to build a saw mill at the mouth of Snake Creek Canyon. Jeremiah Robey, Sydney Epperson and others whom I do not remember took up claims over there about this time.

About the first of November several families arrived and settled on the fort line. William B. Sessions and Robert Broadhead plowed out a ditch to convey water for culinary purposes on the south line of the street, starting from the spring branch of what is known as Rodger Horrocks'

property, then running west to the slough by the field. This was the first water ditch made on a street line in Heber City. The north line of the fort was about half a block north of the water ditch.

About the first week in November snow began to fall and continued throughout the month. December being clear and cold, we hauled our firewood for the winter from what was called the "Big Grove" about the center of the big field. The weather was intensely cold and the squeaking of the wagon wheels could be heard a mile away. Christmas week was mild. Some boys and girls came up from Provo on a visit and had a good time. When they returned home we felt lonesome. The weather set in cold again. The snow was about eighteen inches deep and continued so until the first week in March.

On the first Thursday in the month when holding fast meeting, the snow began to melt on the north side of the house. This was the first thaw since Christmas and it kept on thawing until about the 15th when the snow was all gone.

There were, I believe, some seventeen families in Heber during the winter of 1859-1860. There were also some families in Midway. The fort was forty rods square, four rods being allowed for each family to close in. William Davidson built on his city lot on the block now occupied by the tithing office.

In the winter of 1859-1860 William Meeks and James Adams, with some other men went up Center Creek canyon and got out timbers for a saw mill. In the fall of 1860 they began sawing lumber. This was the first pioneer mill in the valley. The next was started by Mr. Shirts on Snake Creek.

About the middle of March a number of families arrived from Provo, among whom were Zemira Palmer, T. H. Giles, George Giles, Frederick Giles, George Carlile, Jesse Bond, Jonathan Clegg and others whom I do not remember now. About this time a meeting was called to take into consideration the utility of bring all the springs east of the city and Lake Creek in to one stream, as we found in the Autumn of 1859 that Lake Creek, in it's natural channel failed to reach the city limits. Next morning we all turned out with teams, plows and shovels and went about one mile east to the Thorn Spring. A furrow was plowed to intersect the two springs south of the Thorn Spring and continued on down to the channel at the present mill pond. A party of men made a dam in Lake Creek and turned the water down the dry bed to intersect the spring branches. This brought all the waters in to one stream.

Parties kept arriving all that month from Utah County, and by the first

of April there were about forty teams plowing in the north field and on Center Creek.

On the first of March snow was about eighteen inches deep on the level and no signs of a thaw, but on the 15th of the month it was about all gone. I don't think I ever saw snow go off faster.

The Spring was dry and windy, after our grain was planted. There was scarcely any rain and the soil was as loose as an ash heap. A great deal of grain was uncovered by the wind and had to be harrowed over again and watered to bring it up. Notwithstanding these drawbacks there were good crops raised.

A celebration was talked about for Pioneer Day (July 24th) and also the building of a bowery for that purpose, but John M. Murdock was in favor of erecting a meeting house and a school house in one and his plan was adopted. All went to work with a will and so far completed the building, that we were enabled to hold our celebration herein. This was accomplished in about two weeks time and before a good many had homes for themselves. The building was a double log house, about 20 by 40 feet, with a setup on the west side for a speaker's stand. All we could afford was a dirt roof, which leaked so badly at times we could not hold meetings there.

A serious accident occurred about the first of July, which cast a gloom over our little burg--the drowning of Father William Fenn. He was returning from a trip to Provo, on foot and alone. On hearing he had started to walk to the valley and failing to arrive, we began to search the river. The search was continued every day until the 14th of the month, when Isaac Baum and myself discovered his body on a small island in the river about where Snake Creek enters the stream. He was as black as a negro and the flesh was putrid and we were obliged to put a sheet under the body in order to carry it to the bank. We sent for Coroner Woods of Midway, held an inquest and buried the remains on the spot. It is supposed he had undertaken to wade across the river, and the current being strong had carried him down stream.

The fort lines were all filled up this fall, that is, the four rods space allotted to each family, and some spaces had two families located thereon. There were over forty families in the fort line, and a few had built on their city lots.

Along in the Fall William Meeks resigned his office and William M. Wall was called to fill the position. He was herding cattle in Round Valley, but came over to Heber and presented his commission to the people and then chose James Laird and John M. Murdock as his counselors. By this

time we had our log meeting house completed and were holding our Sunday meetings therein.

Our grain crop was more than doubled this year and ripened much earlier than the crops of 1859. I cut some barley on the 26th of August and commenced cutting wheat on September 3rd. All the grain was harvested in this month. The north and west fields were closed in, nearly to the river, by a five foot worm fence, the south line being about eighty rods south of the present county road to Midway. There were about 4,000 acres in the fields.

According to agreement in starting to write a short history of the early settlement of the valley, I would be willing for correction. In stating that Elias Cox built the first house on the fort lines, I find that I may be mistaken as John W. Witt informs me that he erected and occupied the first house on said lines. The erection of said house I will narrate further on. I wish to mention a few adventures and mishaps of Mr. Witt and family in moving up here and settling down. In coming through Provo Canyon Mr. Witt had a "bull team" as it is vulgarly called, which was a little unmanageable sometimes. Between the north and south forks of the Provo River the dugways were very sidling and having his family and his household effects along, it made his wagon a little top heavy. Lo and behold, the wagon box, with the family in it, tipped from the running gears into the river upside down. Had it not been for some assistance from Midway people, that came up at the time, there would have been a sadder story to relate. But by working bravely they saved the family from drowning, although they lost most of the household effects. After getting all the things righted again, he continued his journey, arriving at the London Spring late in the evening, almost famished with hunger and cold. The wind was howling like a Minnesota blizzard. He had to dig a hole in the ground to keep the fire from blowing away. The great difficulty was that he had nothing to cook, his supplies having been all lost in the river. He had to mix the dough in the flour sack, which he had saved from the river. He borrowed a tin plate from William Davidson, I think he said, to bake the cakes in. His son, J.W. Witt who was young at that time, not saying that he may be young yet, (though he is a bachelor), said all they had left from the wreck, in the way of a cooking outfit was an old pitcher. Mr. Witt had to do the cooking as it was too cold for Mr. D's wife to be out of the wagon. They dined on a light supper that night. next morning they started to Provo with Mr. Palmer who had out-traveled them the day before. They found Mr. Palmer camping on Spring Creek. He camped with him that night and concluded to locate his present farm, making a dugout

on the bank of Lake Creek. He having along two of his brothers-in-law, Maroni and Daniel Bigelow, they built the front of the dugout with logs, and covered it with brush; this was the first dwelling house in the valley. They then went to work putting in a crop. When they had finished, they concluded to build a better dwelling. They found a grove of timber about where the present grist mill pond is situated, from which they procured logs to build the house. About the time they had the logs on the ground, William Meeks came along and said, "Why don't you build up in the fort?" After talking with Mr. Meeks a little while, Mr. Witt concluded to move his logs on to the fort line. After moving the logs, he tells me, they went to work with a right good will and the house was ready to move into the second day. This according to Mr. Witt's statement, was the first house ready for occupation on the fort lines. It has always been understood by me and others that Elias Cox occupied the first house on the fort lines, but I have no right to dispute Mr. Witt's word, he being there every day ought to know better about the circumstances than we do, for we were still living in the London Wickiup by the London Spring branch.

Mr. Witt had quite a family of small children at this time, some five or six I believe, sometimes some of his youngsters would go with him down to the field. At one time about the month of September when he was away from home, I think he had gone to Salt Lake City, the circumstance I am about to relate occurred. We had all moved our wickiups down to the fort. By this time there were several houses on the west string of the fort line. Along with the rest was Mrs. John Carlile's double log house situated about where she now lives, as I was coming out of the field one evening a little before sundown, I met a little girl going down towards the field. I said "Where are you going little girl?" "Going to meet Pa" was the reply. In coming up to Carlile's house I saw Mrs. Carlile and asked her if all her children were home. She said "yes". I said, "I met a little girl down in the grass." The street was all grown up with grass at that time, there being very few cattle to pasture. That evening when Mrs. Witt was ready to put the flock of children to bed, in counting noses, she found one missing. "Where is so and so", she said to the older ones. "Don't know", was the reply. She became alarmed and went to the first neighbor, Elias Cox, then to John Hamilton's and from there to Mrs. Carlile's. No tidings of the missing until, reaching this house, Mrs. Carlile remembering the circumstance of grass, a general alarm was given to arms- to arms-a child lost. Mr. Witt had been fortunate enough to secure some sperm candles from some of the trains traveling through the valley on the road to Camp Floyd; so about a dozen candles were lighted, and I started about

where I saw the child last. We formed in line of battle, as it were, about six feet apart and started on the hunt. The little waif was soon found lying down fast asleep by a spring that Carlile had dug out, about ten rods below their house. But Oh! Wasn't there joy in the camp then. All retired for the night happy and contented.

Another circumstance I will relate of a youngster being lost and found some one or two years later on. Young Ike Baum being a smart boy about this time, as he thought himself, started down in the field to hunt his pa also, I suspect. The parents missed him I suppose when bedtime came. So the drum was beat- to arms-to arms and all hands rallied to the cry. A rush for the field was made, crying out "Iky-Iky" There was no answer, all night long. A party in the morning went to the river and following up the fence that had lately been built closing in the field on the west, they found the little urchin sitting on the top rail of the fence like a rooster, I suppose looking for better pasture. There was joy again in camp, at the prodigal son's return. The song went forth as it speaks of in the Bible, "For this my son was dead but is alive again, was lost and is found."

About the first conflagration we had at the fort was the burning of John Jordan's wickiup in 1859. It was situated about the present site of the northwest district school houses. He had found a market for hops. Lots of hops were found on the river banks in those days. The whole family were gathering at this time, and had about one hundred pounds stored in bedticks and sacks inside the wickiup. His intentions were to gather enough hops to buy a team. Some one, I suppose, was borrowing fire (matches were very scarce in those days) and sparks caught in the dry thatch and the whole contents burned up, hops and all. Hops were worth \$1.00 a pound in those days making quite a loss to Mr. Jordan and family.

In the summer and fall of 1859, most all the freight teams enroute to Camp Floyd passed through this valley. As they passed by the teamsters would swap old wagon covers, seamless sacks, etc. for vegetables and grain. The market material we got in this way furnished us with about all the common wearing apparel we could get in those days, and men thought they were well dressed when they had canvas suits, consisting of pants and jumper, made from an old wagon sheet. What boots and shoes we had, though boots were nearly out of the question, we used to preserve, not in a 'mason' jar but under our arms until we got to the field, when we were glad to "preserve" our feet in old shoes, for the stubble was too much like pins and needles for our bare feet.

When the soles of our shoes wore out Brother Jonathan Carlile would make us some wooden bottoms. Oh, Excuse me, I mean soles. Many a time

have I seen Grandmother Christina Carlile trudging along to the field with her shoes under her arm. These are some of the hardships of frontier life.

Wild game was plentiful at this time. I remember seeing, one day in the summer of 1859 a herd of 17 antelope come down to what was called John McDonald's Hill, just below George W. Clyde's residence and cross the fields in Indian file to the river. But this is only one of many such instances. Bears too would come down into our fields and dig the carrots and other roots for us. This reminds me of a genuine bear story, which I will relate. One day in the spring of 1861, while going up the road east of main street I saw something dodging along trying to get through the worm fence that enclosed the lots now owned by Mary A. Moulton, when I was opposite the creature I saw to my surprise that it was a bear with two small cubs. I changed my course in a hurry and ran back to John Hamilton but there were no men home. I next started down the lane north towards where George Fraughton was building a large log barn, shouting 'Bear, Bear! By this time the quadrupeds had found their way through the fence and were making tracks across the field towards the barn. Mr. Fraughton got his gun and fired at Mrs. Bruin, the bullet just grazing her side. With a howl of surprise and pain she struck out at full speed; but the next shot brought her down. One of the cubs was shot and the other made its escape and struck out for the hills to the southeast, but it was captured alive by Hyrum Oaks who kept it tied up with a chain for quite awhile. It eventually broke the chain and got away. Elisha Averett tells me that his father saw it on the Meeks Meadow near the river. The chuck of chain nearly scared the life out of him for he thought "Old Nick" was after him sure.

The winter of 1860 -61 was about the same as the former winter; we started plowing about the first week in April, I believe there was about double the grain put in. A good many began to move out and build on their city lots this summer. Families kept coming in from other settlements so there was nothing to do but to build on the city lots. I would say here if any one would like to see the last relic of the old fort lines, he can take a walk down to Mr. James Shank's property and gaze on the old log dwelling which formerly belonged to Richard Jones, there are the pin holes in the south end of the cabin yet where Mrs. Jones used to wind her warp, getting it ready for the loom. The old primitive style of warping. This log cabin is the only one left that I know of and it will soon disappear, by the signs that appear on the premises. Mr. Shanks is having erected a large roomy sandstone building, and soon the old log hut will be no more. It will soon be consumed by the fire in the stove, and passed off into the elected.

In 1861, C. N. Carroll and myself fenced in a garden patch on the city lot I now live on, being then in about the middle of the fort. About the 15th of May we plowed out a water ditch on the north side of the street, tapping Spring Creek about where George Blackley's corral now stands. This was, I think, the second water ditch plowed on the street lines; the first one was plowed in the fall of 1859 through the town as before mentioned.

I think it was about the 26th of September that Col. Bryant Pace and Major J. O. Duke were here and organized us into a military district and appointed J. W. Witt, Major and John Hamilton ,Adjutant over the division of militia. This is as near as I can come to dates according to my journal. I was on parade that day, being the first day of training mentioned. I will stand corrected if otherwise informed. On the 26th of October I find another parade day recorded being Saturday, we had a whole day of it. We used to have a good many days of training in the year. Living in an Indian country the policy was to prepare for war in the days of peace.

William M. Wall was a great hand for conducting sham fights, we had many a one in the middle of the fort, cavalry against infantry. I remember one time we were having a sham fight, the infantry was charging the cavalry when the horses got scared and ran across the ditch. Charles Thomas's horse threw him and put his shoulder out of joint and he is still lame in that arm. There was no more sham fighting that day.

Crops began to ripen a little sooner every year. I cut some barley on the 18th of August this year and commenced on the wheat a few days later. We had very good crops again this year. During the summer and fall I built a double log house on my lot and moved into it in November.

Much rain and snow fell, causing threshing to be late; there being only one threshing machine, it took a long time to finish up the threshing; often we would be threshing until Christmas.

On Christmas there was about eighteen inches of snow on the level. It commenced raining in the afternoon and rained for three days, the snow all went then there was more snow and more rain.

On the 1st of January 1862, the fields were all bare and cattle roaming all over; this kind of weather raised the river and it washed the road away in the canyon. During Christmas week William Giles and William Strong were up here from Provo, on a visit and had a light wagon for conveyance. When ready to return they found the road washed out and had to return on horseback, no more going to Provo for grinding in those days. Then coffee mills came in to play with boiled wheat for a change. Gut an enterprising man by the name of William Reynolds solved the breadstuff problem. He

hired John Jordan Sr. to cut a pair of small burrs, made a frame, set them up and ground what we called chopped feed, or graham flour, for the rest of the Winter. This small grist mill, so termed, was set up in a log cabin on the premises of Jake Baum, about where Isaac Baum's brick house now stands. The horse power of a thrashing machine was set in the street to run the same, grinding every day. Each family could only get about a half bushel ground at a time. It kept them busy night and day to keep the families in this small supply. The poor horses were in mud almost knee deep, it would snow awhile and then rain awhile all Winter. This was what we called the wet Winter. I have seen as much as three feet of snow and then it rain it all off again. Very few had any wood up for Winter and could not get to the canyons, the snow was too deep, and they had to haul burned willows from the river. There had been a fire thru the Meek's meadow and killed the willows so they made good firewood. The snow was deep and crusted and we had to pack the willows out to the sleigh. That is when we could get down with sleighs. When the rain melted the snow off between storms we could not move at all with our teams and had to lay over until another snow storm. We are now entering into the year 1862. In the Spring months (for it was near on to Summer before we began to plow, (7th day of May) the snow began to be soft in the mountains and hillsides; on every little steep side hill there would be a snowslide. The west side of the valley, or the Snake Creek hills as we called them, looked as though the snow had nearly all slid down into the hollows. In taking a glance over the whole country it looked like a white sheet, all the underbrush was covered up, nothing but the trees sticking out of the snow. This was before the snow began to slide.

In the Winter of 1861 and 62 , John Van Wagoner Sr. was building a grist mill on Snake Creek, about one mile below the present site of Midway settlement. John Jordan finished and dressed the mill stones. I remember helping him roll the big blocks of bastard granite on a sleigh. The blocks were gotten from the hill about where Charles Thomas now resides. Sometimes in the month of May, Mr. Van Wagoner started to grind a little flour, not having very good bolting cloth it was not the very best of flour. But it was a little ahead of the chop feed. There was a rush for Snake Creek then. But when he had fairly started to grind the river was up and booming and we could not cross with wagons. Then a happy thought struck our fellow townsman, Henry McMullin. "Why not build a canal boat with which to cross the stream?" Being a ship carpenter he soon had a boat ready for service; the next question was where to launch it. The water had risen until it covered Meeks Meadow and the island, making the

river about a half mile wide. Being so wide the current was not so swift, consequently this was chosen as the best place to cross, and we went to work boating our grain over. Chop feed had gone out of date but we must have breadstuff by some hook or crook, and the river was booming until after the Fourth of July, in fact high water lasted until late in August. There were three clusters of homes on Snake Creek at that time; the upper group around Peter Shirt's saw mill, the middle near Sidney Epperson's ranch (It was from this one that the town derived its name of Midway) and the lower group was situated at the grist mill. During the Indian troubles on 1866 the people of all three hamlets centered at Midway.

Ephriam Hanks made a "big spludge on the Fourth of July, and invited everybody over to the barbecue which consisted of a roast ox and I don't know what all. So the boys started over with teams to have a good time, but while crossing the river at what was know as the three crossings, they had an upset and the wagon boxes floated off, luckily no one was hurt, and the sport went on.

On the 8th of August, Uncle Fred Giles and myself started to Provo on foot, we crossed the river at the old crossing, near William Bagley's farm. We had to strip to keep our clothes dry, for the water reached our waists, and we crossed on a riffle at that; so you may judge the amount of snow that fell in the mountains the preceding Winter, to keep high water up so long.

During the Winter of 1861-62, the Heber City Dramatic Association was organized. Elisha Averett Sr. called a few of the brethren together for that purpose and Mr. Averett, was elected manager, and John Hamilton, secretary. The first play put on the boards was "Priestcraft in Danger". The play was presented in the old log meeting house; using blankets and quilts for scenery. The people were so well pleased with the play that it was played three nights in succession to a crowded house. But it was a free thing and the house was small. A committee was appointed to hunt up some cheap scenery, hearing that Harry Bowing of Salt Lake City had some to see, the committee went to inspect it and to see if a bargain could be struck. Mr. Bowling had been running a small theatre in his dwelling home. The scenery consisted of about four changes (This I think was the first scenery painted in Salt Lake City.) A bargain was made for the scenery, we agreeing to deliver to Mr. Bowing lumber and grain to the amount of \$300 for it and the next Spring, as soon as the roads became passable, John Hamilton hauled it to Heber. There are still some of those curtains among the scenery of the present stage property of the Heber dramatic association, but enlarged and repainted. There were several

plays put on the boards that Spring, and all were well received. On account of being so badly crowded in the old log house, it was suggested that we build a hall of our own the coming season. A committee was appointed to draft a plan of the building and as we had such fine building material in the red sand stone quarries close at hand, it was decided to build of that material. After our crops were in, we went to work with a will, some hauling rock and sand; some getting our lumber from Lake Creek, to finish the building and pay for the scenery about a dozen fellows went to work to learn the mason's trade with Elisha Averett as "boss mason". By the 24th of July we had the walls up ready for the roof. We paid for the scenery, but the building was never finished. The walls stood for a quarter of a century and were finally torn down. Query?? "What was the matter? Why was the hall not finished?" Well, to be sincere and plain we were not united. And again we had some pious old fogies living amongst us at that time. They would come round whining and complaining about building a theatre hall before a place of worship, or in other words a meeting house to worship in. They kept whining around while we were building and then would talk to the bishop and others until there was quite a feeling against the building going on any further. The bishop came to us and advised us to go no further with it at present. We proffered to let the community hold meetings in the hall until we could build a meeting house; that is, if all hands would turn in and help us complete the building. But no, that would not do. The disgrace would still be there of having erected a theatre hall before a meeting house. So it would be of no use to build at that time. The company was discouraged; our president Mr. Averett moved away in the Fall, which put a damper on the theatre enterprise, and there was not energy enough left to finish the building, and that ended the matter, so far as our hall was concerned.

But still we kept up the association and had performances every Winter. James Duke was elected our next president, who held the office about ten years, after which your humble servant was chose to fill the vacancy though the resignation of James Duke. Under the able management of James Duke the company felt strong enough to purchase more scenery. Having heard that the Cluff Bros. had some scenery to sell; in the Winter of 1873-74 we sent a committee to purchase it. The scenery was bought for \$150 to be paid in grain delivered at Provo. This scenery was purchased by Cluff Bros, at the old Camp Floyd. It consisted to some twelve changes. Painted in water colors and twelve changes of new scenes, making twenty-four changes in all.

Our social hall was completed about this time. We wanted to put on a

fine appearance in moving into our new quarters, so we put several plays on the boards that winter and paid for the scenery right away. We played three or four seasons under this organization, when the Cluffs , Carrolls and some others moved away from Heber. The secretary's book got lost, so we could not tell who belonged to the association and who did not. The last few years we have been running under a combination of five persons until the Winter, when a new organization was effected, but I am sorry to say they have not accomplished much as yet.

Bishop R.S.Duke tells me that on account of the high water washing the road away in Provo Canyon and making it impassable for wagons, he was under necessity of carrying a plow on his back all the way from Provo City. This is another incident of pioneer life.

The high water of this season stopped all traffic with wagons on this side of the river. It was dangerous to life and property to undertake to ford the river in such a fearful, turbulent stream. Therefore, we saw the necessity of a bridge across the river at some given point. A question was raised in regard to the best and most convenient place for building the bridge. Along about the first of August, when the river became fordable, we went to work in earnest. Some teams were sent to the Red Pine Canyon for stringers, some up the river for covering. A few men were hewing timbers while others were building abutments, and in a short time the bridge was so far completed as to be used.

About this time the Snake Creek folks made a zig-zag road, over hill and dale, on the other side of the river, going over a divide above Ben Norris' farm. It was commonly known as Eph Hanks' cutoff. But thanks to the ingenuity of man, they have made a nearer cut-off at the present time. Our grain crop was light this year, that is , light in weight, but big in measure. Jack Frost came a little too early. The season being late in sowing time, everything else was way behind. September 15th was about the first harvesting done, and harvesting was not completed until about the middle of October. Threshing was also late, not being commenced before November. I find in perusing my journal that it was December before my job of threshing was reached, and I think January, 1863, came around before all was finished. Remember we had only one threshing machine in Heber in those days, so it took a long time to finish up. This was the first year that the iron clad grasshoppers visited us. They came in millions along in August just as the wheat was headed out nicely. Grain was too far advanced for them to hurt it much this year, but next spring and summer they went after the grain in fine style.

From 1859 to the Winter of 1862-63 we were under the jurisdiction

of Utah County. I find my tax receipts for 1860-61 are signed by George W. Beam and in 1862 by John Harvey, deputy assessor. But this Winter we were taken off by the legislature. I think it was through the influence of George W. Beam an act was passed setting off quite a portion of our Territory and designating it as Wasatch County. By this time our population had increased to near 1,000 souls. Midway had three small settlements. Quite a few families had settled on Center Creek, some at Charleston, some in Round Valley (Wallsburg) and some at Hailstone. Melvin Ross owned the farm at that time and used it for a sheep ranch.

When we were set off as a county, the next thing was officers to run it. An election was held some time in March 1863 for that purpose, I can't remember the first set of officers, so I will have to defer that until our next, or until I have examined the records, if the clerk will allow me this small favor.

If I am not mistaken, Alex Wilkens of Provo, was the first person to offer goods for sale in this county. He owned a ranch about where Charleston is situated now. Charles Shelton, deceased, and formerly our county clerk, was living on said ranch and sold goods for Mr. Wilkens. This was the Summer and Fall of 1861.

I well remember loading a big spring calf into my wagon one afternoon in the Fall of said year and going to market. My wife, of course, going along to make a big purchase of goods, and then returning with a small bundle of goods that would fit in a good sized pocket. Dainties such as tea, coffee, sugar, etc., had to be dispensed with by the poorer class of people in those days. In fact we were all about in the same rank at that time. All our clothing was mostly in rags, we had been using old wagon covers and sacks made into clothing to cover our nakedness. We were glad to get something new for a change.

Andrew J. Ross was the next, I believe, to open up a place to sell a few goods, in a log cabin on Jesse Bond's lot, on main street. He soon became rich or broke and retired. Next in order was Snyder & Co., from Wanship, and then William Jennings, of Salt Lake City, with Mr. Davis as clerk. These two firms opened out on main street in William Davidson's--better known as "Scotch Willie's" log cabin on the spot where the tithing office now stands. I don't mean to say that both firms sold goods at the same time, but one followed the other. J. W. Witt then opened a stock of goods in a log cabin joining the tithing office, then situated where Mr. Witt's big barn now stands.

About this time the Over-Land stage line was established between the Missouri River and Salt Lake City and of course they wanted oats to feed

their horses. Mr. Witt got the contract to deliver oats as far east as Green River. Then the cry was, " Hurrah boys with your wagons and teams for the road!"

I remember starting with a company for Green River on the 20th of October, 1863. It was as "cold as sin:, as the saying is and blew "big guns" all the way there. Gravel would strike you in the face and we could pick up handfuls of it that had collected through the day upon our wagon cover as it lay over our grain sacks. We delivered our loads and got back all safe before Winter set in. It was dangerous in those days of deep snows to leave home so late in the season.

This was the beginning of good times for Heber. Plenty of money rolling in, grain kept raising until the price reached \$3.00 a bushel for oats, and \$5 .00 a bushel for wheat. Merchandise was high also. Stoves were from \$150 to \$200 each, sugar and nails were one dollar per pound. Factory and prints from 50 cents to one dollar per yard, a good wagon was worth \$300 dollars and everything else in proportion.

But I must go back to the subject started on.

About this time Judge Carter, from Bridger, opened out a stock of goods in Phillip Smith's log cabin, and soon after he erected the rock building now occupied by the New West School. Judge Carter having the grain contract for the overland mail, he would bring in goods and load pack with grain, prices still keeping up to \$3 and \$5 per bushel. I well remember taking to Carter's store with 100 bushels of oats for a 3 1/2 thimble, and a Bishop wagon which had just been brought across the plains. \$300 seems a big price for a wagon, but compare the price of grain then and at present. 100 bushels of oats will not buy a wagon now. Mr. Carter had some of these cheap thermometers, 25 cents each I think is the price asked for them now, and wishing to possess one I asked the price. I was told they were \$2.50 each. Being a little lunny on weather predictions, you know, I felt a little crestfallen, because I could not afford to buy one at that time, and had to wait until I was more flushed with money. Jim Miller, Judge Carter's clerk at the time, had one of these thermometers hanging outside the store. I would often run over before sunrise to see how much below zero it showed, and very often I had to brush the frost off before I could see the figures. Frequently it was 30 to 40 degrees below zero. One Friday evening, about the middle of December, myself and Uncle John Cummings stayed in the store until about 11 o'clock. It was a clear, bright night and the thermometer registered 30 degrees below zero. There was a little dance going on at John Hamilton's and Mr. Miller was over there until about 2 o'clock in the morning. Next morning I asked Mr. Miller

how low the thermometer was when he came home. With an oath he said he couldn't tell, he thought the mercury was in the ball frozen up. Why bless your souls, I have seen a bucket of water frozen nearly solid in the morning that had stood by the fireplace all night. The logs in our building would crack like the report of a gun sometimes in the night, making one jump out of bed in fright. You had to cover your head in the bed to keep your nose and ears from freezing. The bed clothes in the morning would be covered with frost. Those were times of cold winters and deep snows.

The old times have gone by and my incidents have lengthened out, so I will have to leave merchandising till another chapter.

About the time Judge Carter moved his goods into the rock store, Louis Reggel and Jake Harris, of Salt Lake City, opened out a few goods in John Gallagher's log cabin on Main Street, now occupied by Mary Ann Moulton. Alonzo E. Hyde was clerking for this firm. Mr. Reggel sold out soon after to Mr. Harris who still continued the business for some length of time.

This will bring us down to the year 1867, when President Hatch was appointed to preside over the county. He arrived here on the 11th day of December of that year, bringing with him some three loads of goods, I believe. He had a hard time getting here on account of the roads, I think he was about two days coming through Provo Canyon. We are having wet weather at the present time, and I think December of that year was nearly as bad. Roads were almost as impassable then as they are now. I remember some of the brethren had to take teams down and help him through the canyon and he had on only about 1,000 pounds. Pres. Hatch, after looking around for a suitable place to open out his goods, finally rented the store building, then known as McAfee's castle, from Moses Cluff. The present owner is George Blackley, I believe. In 1860 Pres. Hatch erected his present dwelling house, and he then moved his goods into the south room of that building.

In 1868-69 the grasshoppers came here and ate most of our crops, causing the people to seek employment elsewhere in order to get the where-with-all to sustain life.

About this time the Union Pacific railroad had entered Utah and grading was being done in Echo and Weber Canyons. So all hands went to work on the railroad.

At this time greenbacks were more plentiful than grain, and some had a little cash to spare, so it was deemed advisable to start a co-operative store. Pres. Hatch and J. W. Witt turned their entire stock of goods into the store, and the business was still carried on in the south room of Pres. Hatch's dwelling house. You see we started on a small scale when all the

business was done in a room about 14 by 16 feet. Compare that to the present large establishment.

James and Samuel Lindsay were the next, I believe, who opened out a few goods. They held forth in the rock dwelling house of Mrs. Lindsay, their mother. I think about one year's experience satisfied them with merchandising, and they sold out half their stock and cried quits.

We come now to the time when our enterprising merchant, Mr. Mark Jeffs started out in business on a small scale. After working on the railroad grade in 1868-69, he accumulated a little surplus cash and concluded to invest in a few goods. He was living at this time with his father in a small log cabin, owned by Elizabeth Carlile, situated on her pasture lot. His capital amounted to about \$70. He went to Salt Lake and invested this large fortune in such staple articles as calico, factory, sugar, tea, etc. He stood his scales in the window, measured off the calico on the bed and tied up the articles on a chair. This was the primitive style of doing business in those days. He saw his business increasing and, therefore, had to look out for more extensive quarters, so he bought out Phillip Smith's property on Main Street, now owned by Robert Clyde. This room seemed quite ample, but he soon found out that it was too small. Judge Carter closed out his business in Heber about this time so Mr. Jeffs rented the large rock store, thinking, no doubt, he would have plenty of room. This building was considered large in those days. It was said that Mark was launching out on an extensive scale, and some of the wiseacres began to hint that his doom was sealed. Notwithstanding the prognostications of his downfall he still continued to increase his stock of goods, until he found he would have to seek still more extensive quarters. He bought out B. A. Norris's property on Main Street and erected the rock building which he has since occupied. Last summer he found it necessary to enlarge again. At the present time he is carrying on one of the largest business establishments in the county.

I believe the next in order comes the firm of A. E. McMullen and Hank Alexander, who opened out a few goods on the corner now owned by Harmon Cummings. This firm was of short duration.

The next in order, I believe, was H.S. Alexander and sons, who started business on the west side of Main street, on the lot now owned by Mr. Isaac Cummings. This firm held out for some time, and then Hank Alexander tried it alone for awhile.

Then comes the Rasband Brothers, John Duncan's variety store, F.C. Buell, and Turner and Sons, not forgetting Brother Rogers with his notions and variety. This Fall a new firm was started under the name of Clegg and

Sons and last of all our new drug store, under the able management of Mr. Bridge, formerly of the Z.C.M.I. drug department of Salt lake City.

At the present time there are five stores on the west and three on the east side of main street. There are two meat markets and one barber shop.

I have endeavored to place the different firms in their proper order, as my memory serves me. If I have left out any firm it has not been my intention to do so, and if informed of the fact, will make corrections hereafter.

In looking over my history of Wasatch County, I see that I have stated that our county was organized in the Winter of 1863. This is a mistake. It should be 1862, J.W. Witt was appointed judge by the Legislature sitting at that time. February 22, 1862, at a special meeting called by Judge Witt for the purpose of organizing the county court of Wasatch County, the following officers were selected.

Selectmen: Thomas Todd Sr., John H. Van Wagoner and James Duke;
Assessor and Collector: Snelling M. Johnson--old settlers will remember him better by the title of Cub Johnson. Treasurer: J. M. Murdock, County Surveyor: John Sessions, Superintendent of Schools: Thomas H. Giles, County Clerk: James McNaughtan.

First general term held March 3, 1862. At the August election, all the above persons were elected as stated.

At the March session of court (1863), Thomas H. Giles was appointed assessor and collector. H. McMullen, road supervisor and Joseph S. Murdock selected to represent Wasatch County in the next Legislature.

Winter hung in the lap of Spring until it was the first of May before plowing commenced. On this account our crops were late in ripening, it being in the month of September before any harvesting was done. On the 8th and 9th of August a two day conference was held in the bowery by the side of our log meeting house at which Brigham Young, H.C. Kimball, D.H. Wells and others were present. Also present was the Provo Choir, under the leadership of Jas. E. Daniels, and the brass band under the management of John Watkins, and quite a few other residents of Provo. The first day being Saturday, President Young proposed to have a grand ball in the evening to be held in our commodious log cabin meeting house which would accommodate three sets of quadrilles by crowding a little. All that could afford a tallow dip for light were requested to bring one along. We had a good time of it, all felt sociable. At the hour of 12 O' Clock we were dismissed with a few words of prayer.

At this time we had a Presidency consisting of William W. Wall and two counselors, and Bishop J. S. Murdock and two counselors. Some

misunderstanding occurred in regard to their duties and it was deemed advisable to drop the Presidency, so Bishop Murdock was sustained as Bishop over the whole valley.

This was not the first time that President Brigham Young visited the valley as some supposed. In company with others he passed through in the Summer of 1859, took dinner on the Center Creek and called it Thief Creek. This time he had a road meter on his carriage. I think his measurement was 26 miles from Provo to Center Creek and 18 miles to Kimball's Ranch.

In my chapter on our merchants I have been reminded that I had entirely left out one of our earliest enterprising merchants, N.C. Murdock of Charleston. I had entirely forgotten him, but I now report him with pleasure. In 1863, I think he opened out a stock of goods in a double log house by John Turner's store, lately pulled down by William Thacker..